

Remarks

Claims 1-9, 17, 19, and 25-30 are pending in the application, with claims 1, 17, and 19 being the independent claims. New claims 25-30 have been added. The amendments above do not add new matter.

Based on the above the above amendments and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the outstanding objections and rejections.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §112

Claims 1-9, 11, 17, and 19-24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as allegedly containing new matter. Although Applicants disagree that the subject matter objected to is new matter, it has been removed from the claims in order to expedite prosecution. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 3, 11, 17, 19, and 21-24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Assan (WO 02/39864) in view of Graham et al. (US 2001/0047559). Claims 11 and 21-24 have been canceled, thereby rendering their rejection moot. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Independent claims 1, 17, and 19 each recite that the motorized internal mechanism imparts a tumbling motion to the drive unit, and that the drive unit imparts a tumbling motion to the sheet. The Assan and Graham et al. publications do not disclose such a

tumbling motion. The Examiner relies on page 5, lines 15-29 of Assan as disclosing a tumbling motion. Applicants agree that the driving gear (not shown) inside the ball 12 of Assan (the driving unit) imparts a tumbling motion on the ball. However, the ball 12 of Assan does not impart a tumbling motion on the sheet. Instead, the sheet is attached to a top-hat and rotates in a single plane (horizontal), not in a tumbling (*i.e.*, end-over-end) fashion. The Graham et al. publication also fails to disclose a tumbling motion of the sheet, as the sheet of Graham et al. is stationary.

Accordingly, even if combined, the Assan and Graham et al. publications fail to disclose or render obvious all of the features recited in independent claims 1, 17 and 19 of the present application. Claims 3 and 11 depend from and add features to independent claim 1 and are therefore patentable over the Assan and Graham et al. publications for at least the same reasons as independent claim 1. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 1, 2, 4-5, 17, 19, and 22-24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ussen (USPN 6,550,089) in view of Merrill et al. (USPN 3,722,134). Claims 22-24 have been canceled, thereby rendering their rejection moot. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Independent claims 1, 17, and 19 have been amended above to add that the sheet includes at least one appendage extending therefrom. This feature had been recited in dependent claims 11, 20, and 21, which have been canceled above. These claims were not rejected by the Examiner over the combination of Ussen and Merrill et al., and the Ussen

and Merrill et al. patents, either alone or in combination, do not disclose at least one appendage extending from the sheet. Accordingly, claims 1, 17, and 19 are patentable over the Ussen and Merrill et al. patents. Claims 2 and 4-5 depend from and add features to independent claim 1 and are therefore patentable over the Ussen and Merrill patents for at least the same reasons as independent claim 1. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 3 and 6-9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ussen in view of Merrill et al., and in further view of Sohmer (USPN 3,742,547). Claims 3 and 6-9 depend from independent claim 1. As noted above with respect to the rejection of claim 1 over Ussen and Merrill et al., amended claim 1 recited that the sheet includes at least one appendage. Neither the Ussen patent, nor the Merrill et al. patent, discloses a sheet with at least one appendage. The Sohmer patent also fails to disclose such a sheet. Accordingly, even if combined, the combination fails to disclose the features recited in independent claim 1, which are incorporate into claims 3 and 6-9. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

New Claims

New claims 25-30 have been added. Claims 25-27 depend from independent claim 17 and claims 28-30 depend from independent claim 19. New claims 25-30 do not add new matter, and are patentable over the cited references for at least the same reasons as the claims from which they depend.

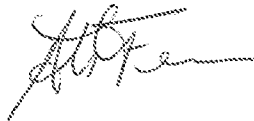
Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Ferro', is written over the printed name.

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